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AUTHOR	Hughes, Donald E.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

An expanded seventh grade program developed from a proposal of the Guidance Department is discussed. The proposal aimed to reorganize the junior high school to better meet the needs of students and teachers. The basic procedures given in the proposal for attaining this objective were to change the role of the counselor to emphasize program coordination and teacher-counselor working relationships, to organize the program into smaller units based on more interstaff planning, and to provide students with more input into program development. The junior high was provided funds for an additional counselor and a one-week summer workshop for two counselors and 10 teachers. Increased teacher-counselor and teacher-teacher communication during the workshop and throughout the year produced a number of objectives and activities to reach the objectives. Some of the activities and developments were a new report grading system, student elective units, circle meetings in the classroom, coordination of instruction between subject areas, less objective testing, and greater use of discussion-inquiry teaching methods. At the end of the school year, 81 percent of the teachers, compared with 51 percent of the teachers at four comparison schools, rated the counselors as very helpful. However, there were few differences between the students in the experimental school and those in four other comparison schools on rated counselor effectiveness. (Author/CK)

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Minneapolis Public Schools

Seventh Grade Expanded Program at Northeast Junior High 1970-71

Donald E. Hughes, Counselor
Ralph S. Pherson, Counselor
Lary Johnson, Research Associate

Ideas expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Minneapolis Public School Administration nor the Minneapolis School Board.

May 1972

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Research and Evaluation Department
Educational Services Division
807 N. E. Broadway
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55413

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Minneapolis Public Schools

Seventh Grade Expanded Program at Northeast Junior High 1970-71

Summary

The Seventh Grade Expanded Program at Northeast Junior High stemmed from a proposal developed by the Guidance Services Department to reorganize the junior high school to better meet the needs of students and teachers. The basic procedures given in the proposal for attaining this objective were to change the role of the counselor to emphasize program coordination and teacher-counselor working relationships, to organize the program into smaller units based on more interstaff planning, and to provide students with more input into program development.

Northeast Junior High was provided funds from the Minneapolis Schools' budget for an additional counselor and a one-week summer workshop for two counselors and ten teachers. Increased teacher-counselor and teacher-teacher communication during the workshop and throughout the year produced a number of objectives, and activities to reach the objectives. Some of the activities and developments were a new report grading system, student elective units, circle meetings in the classroom, coordination of instruction between subject areas, less objective testing, and greater use of discussion-inquiry teaching methods. The counselors coordinated the program planning, assumed responsibility for any possible student disciplinary action, and made efforts to improve teacher-counselor working relationships.

In addition to, and perhaps overshadowing, the actual changes in the seventh grade program, was the development within the staff of an attitude of innovation and a willingness to question previous educational practices. Increased staff communication resulted in a trust and respect that was not possible in the more traditional school setting.

At the end of the school year, 81% of the Northeast teachers, compared with 51% of the teachers at four comparison schools, rated the counselors as very helpful. Also, teachers at Northeast had more contacts than teachers at the comparison schools with the counselors. Although the seventh grade students at Northeast recognized that the role of the Northeast counselor included responsibility for disciplinary action, there were few differences between Northeast students and comparison students on rated counselor effectiveness and on a number of personal and relationship variables.

May 1972

Research and Evaluation Department
Educational Services Division

Table of Contents

	Page
Origin of the Program	1
Workshop	2
The Role of the Counselor	4
Teacher Involvement	6
Student Involvement	7
Administrative Involvement	9
Grading	10
Communication	11
Physical Facilities	13
On-Going Evaluation	13
Positive Outcomes	14
Future of the Program	16
End-of-the-Year Evaluation	16
Results	17
Teacher Response to Counselors	18
Student Response to Counselors	23
Teacher Response to Program	33
Student Response to Program	37
Parent Response to Program	41
Summary of End-of-the-Year Evaluation	41
Appendix A: Copies of Questionnaires	43

List of Tables

Table No.		Page
1	Seventh Grade Teachers' Overall Rating of Counselor Effectiveness at Northeast and Comparison Schools	18
2	Frequency That Counselor Worked with Teacher in Several Areas as Reported by the Teachers	19
3	Helpfulness of Counselors in Several Areas as Reported by Teachers Who Worked With the Counselor at Least Once in That Area.	20
4	Teachers' Opinions as to Whether Counselors and Teachers Should Work Together in Several Areas.	22
5	Northeast Teachers' Ratings of Counselors' Handling of Behavior Problems.	23
6	Amount of Contact that Seventh Grade Students Had With Their Counselor at Northeast Junior High and Four Comparison Schools	25
7	Percentage of Student-Counselor Talks in Various Areas for Students Who Have Talked With Their Counselor at Northeast Junior High and Four Comparison Schools.	26
8	Percentage of Students in Grade Seven Who Have Talked With Their Counselor Because They've Broken School Rules at Northeast Junior High and Four Comparison Schools	27
9	Seventh Grade Students' Description of Student-Counselor Talks About Breaking School Rules at Northeast Junior High and Four Comparison Schools.	27
10	Seventh Grade Students' Perceptions of the Counselor's Job at Northeast Junior High and Four Comparison Schools	29
11	Seventh Grade Students' Perceptions of the Counselor at Northeast Junior High and Four Comparison Schools.	30
12	Overall Rating of Counselor Effectiveness by Seventh Graders at Northeast Junior High and Four Comparison Schools	32
13	Seventh Grade Teachers Reactions to the Expanded Seventh Grade Program	34
14	Northeast Seventh Grade Students' Reactions to the Seventh Grade Expanded Program.	38
15	Parent Response to the Seventh Grade Expanded Program at Northeast Junior High April 1971	40

About this report. . .

This report describes the first year of an experimental program at Northeast Junior High. The idea for the program was developed by the Guidance Services Department under the direction of Dr. Ralph H. Johnson, Director of Guidance Services. Ralph Pherson and Donald Hughes, counselors at Northeast Junior High, were responsible for implementation of the program. The latter two also wrote the first portion of this report up to the End-of-the-Year Evaluation section.

After the middle of the year the Research and Evaluation Department, under the direction of Dr. R. W. Faunce, was asked to help the Northeast administration and counseling department evaluate the program. Lary Johnson, a member of the Research and Evaluation Department, served in this capacity and wrote the Results section of this report.

Origin of the Program

Schools must reflect societal changes. An institution that deals with all socio-economic levels must be organized in such a way as to best provide the basic skills and also enhance the cultural level of its members.

The public schools find themselves in the dilemma of trying to adapt to the changing society of the 1970's with the organization and the goals that seemed to have worked in the 1930's. Change comes slowly in many public schools systems. In others, change seems to be encouraged and facilitated.

The Minneapolis Public School System in the last several years has tried to bring about changes in all levels of the schools. Teachers, administrators, and supportive staff have been stimulated to make schools more relevant to society and more understanding of individual needs. Scheduling changes and curriculum changes have been effected in several schools.

One role in the schools has remained basically untouched. It is that of the secondary school counselor. Was the position effective? Could communication be increased? Questions such as these have troubled counselors in Minneapolis for years. Much thought went into the possible restructuring of the counselor role.

During the 1969-70 school year a pilot project for a counselor role change was developed by the Department of Guidance Services of the Minneapolis Public Schools. The Pilot School Reorganization Project was submitted to junior high schools throughout the city. They were asked to express any interest regarding participation in the project.

Several schools were interested and asked to be included in the project. The basic objectives of the program were as follows:

1. To restructure the roles of teachers, administrators, and counselors, with an emphasis on the change in the role of the counselor.
2. To reorganize the school program into a smaller unit to facilitate instruction, interpersonal relationships, intervention and counseling.

3. To provide the student with a warm, personal identification with school and school staff.

4. To provide an opportunity for students to participate more actively in developing the school program.

5. To demonstrate on a limited scale, under ideal conditions, the efficacy of new school structure and procedures.

6. To provide a smoother functioning school unit.

7. To provide models for future reorganization of the schools.

The teachers' strike in the spring of 1970 dealt a blow to the proposal. At the conclusion of the strike, funds for special programs were severely diminished. Only one school, Northeast Junior High School, was chosen to implement the project.

Once the decision was made, only a few weeks were left in the school year to set down some basic plans. The effect of the strike seemed devastating to the project. Striking and non-striking teachers were not communicating. A general lack of cooperation was evident in the building.

By June 30, the basic plans had been made. Only the seventh grade would be involved in the program. One counselor would be added to the staff to provide two counselors at seventh grade, each with a working lead of about 200 students. Many of the teachers assigned to the program would have only 7th grade students, and many would have a common preparation period. A summer workshop for teachers was decided upon as a necessity. However, funds were secured for only ten teachers. The specifics of the program would be decided upon at the August Workshop.

Workshop

In preparation for the implementation of the new Expanded Program at Northeast a workshop was conducted at the school from August 24th-28th, 1970. The workshop was planned and conducted by the two counselors appointed to head the program, Ralph Pherson and Donald Hughes. Ten teachers spent five full

days hammering out general philosophy, goals and objectives, techniques for implementing the program, and a general evaluation design for measuring progress towards the goals.

Following is a list of the objectives and goals that were unanimously decided upon.

1. Teacher attitudes towards all students should be positive.
2. Students should be responsible for their behavior.
3. Necessary rules concerning students should be clear and should be enforced.
4. Thinking should be rewarded and emphasized.
5. Open book examinations should be used.
6. Objective testing should be limited.
7. The discussion and inquiry method of learning should be emphasized.
8. Homework should be relevant and staff coordinated.
9. Curriculum relevance is essential.
10. The curriculum should be flexible.
11. A second chance by students at subject units should be possible.
12. Classes should be heterogeneous.
13. Students will be involved in planning.
14. Open-ended class meetings should be held regularly in specific classes. Educational-Diagnostic and Social Problem class meetings may be held in any class at any time.
15. Supportive services (counselors, social workers, nurse, etc.) should be in the classroom as much as possible.
16. Staff should utilize auxiliary personnel. (WISE tutors, special ed. aides, etc.)
17. Grades A-F should be abolished.
18. Home-school communications should be encouraged.

Teachers were given the opportunity to create their own program with as many changes as they desired. As they sensed this opportunity and worked on

the task, they promptly discarded much of what was in the pre-planned agenda and went about designing a program that was almost totally their own.

This is not to suggest that everything developed smoothly or unanimously. Many serious differences in philosophy had to be dealt with It was agreed that out of these differences some kind of consensus had to come to which the group would commit itself for the entire school year. At the same time, it was agreed that the participants had to allow themselves a certain degree of flexibility so that changes in the program could be made as the experience unfolded.

As a take off point for discussions every participant was asked to read (prior to attending the workshop) Dr. William Glasser's Schools Without Failure. Materials from other authors were included in the workshop. Some of Glasser's ideas were incorporated into the program - - a no-fail grading system and the use of "circle meetings"--while others were modified or discarded as not practical in our situation. The participants found it valuable to have a generally agreed upon philosophy against which they could test their individual ideas.

Though this week was exhausting, it was also extremely rewarding in the sense that there was total participation by every member of the group. A sense of accomplishment emerged that was to last throughout the school year. The special relationship that exist among members of a group that have given their best effort, in a common cause, was a plus factor that had much to do with whatever success the program now enjoys.

The Role of the Counselor

Perhaps no other role in the junior high school is more undefined in its outer limits of responsibility than that of the counselor. Counselors throughout the school system have been traditionally involved in the testing program,

vocational planning, and the adjustment problems of students.

Under the Expanded Program the role of the counselor changed drastically. He emerged as a group leader through the planning of the workshop and being the discussion leader in the workshop sessions.

This role did not change during the 1970-71 school year. During each of the grade level meetings the counselors were looked upon by the faculty as the discussion leaders. As a result of the workshop role, the counselor became the leader in general program development. The new departmental organization in English and geography was teacher originated but made operational by the involved counselors.

Curriculum development sessions were generally led by the counselors. These sessions centered on what could be done to help the teachers rather than what to teach.

The guidance and counseling functions previously performed were still carried out by the counselors, although much of it in halls and classrooms. The total visibility and availability of counselors increased.

In order to bring about a changed counselor role the authority to suspend students in cases of severe acting out behavior was delegated to the counselor by the school administration.

Walter J. Rock, Principal, and Glenn Sonnenberg, Assistant Principal, gave their fullest cooperation in the implementation of this new counselor role. They were available at all times as resources for advice and support. This full cooperation from building administration was an absolute essential in effecting the counselor role change.

The time lapse and communications gap that previously existed between the counselor and the assistant principal completely disappeared, with the result that a student worked with only one person.

This centering of functions abolished the confusing aspects of who was responsible for what. The counseling role more closely approximated that of the parent; that is to provide help when it is needed, to praise when needed, and to influence positive behavioral changes.

The latitude the counselor could employ in his new role resulted in the use of new approaches when dealing with student problems. Teachers were more receptive to counselor suggestions and students seemed more willing to follow through with their commitments.

Under this new program the counselor became an implement and coordinator of teacher ideas who was committed to making the school a functioning unity in which students could meet success.

Teacher Involvement

The Seventh Grade Expanded Program became a teacher-counselor program. The workshop participants looked upon the project as an opportunity for wide "plug-in" of many teacher-originated ideas.

With the exception of the basic change in counselor role, all other aspects of the program were decided upon by the teachers in the workshop.

The amount of teacher-to-teacher communications increased substantially as a result of the workshop. Teachers who seldom communicated with each other began to participate in the interchange of ideas.

Teacher-counselor communication increased tremendously as an outgrowth of the workshop. The counselor's changed role in the program as an implementor, facilitator, and coordinator of the teacher program was accepted. Teachers began to see the counselor in a new role and began to seek out the counselor's aid in a wide variety of areas.

Teachers in the English and geography areas revised their entire teaching situation. Teachers had a common office and used seven individual classrooms

assigned by subject, not by teacher. Five of these classrooms were new with carpeting and air-conditioning. Teachers gave students choices of courses by offering Student Elective Units in several subjects.

As part of a city-wide Released Time Program, students were released one hour early every Tuesday so teachers could participate in grade level and other type meetings. The grade level meetings were used to solve common problems and to plan future common activities. A constant program evaluation occurred as part of those meetings. In addition to the continuous evaluation process, the staff participated in a November supper meeting and a thorough end-of-the-school-year evaluation.

As the school year progressed and much of the teaching work became routine, constant reminders of the implementation of basic objectives of the program proved necessary. This was done through the Tuesday meetings and also done through the use of a bi-weekly publication to the seventh grade staff called Info-7.

This publication also gave teachers an opportunity to list units being taught, special assignments coming due, and dates of major tests.

In total, the Seventh Grade Expanded Program was a teacher's program that gave teachers a controlling voice in almost every aspect of the seventh grade.

Student Involvement

The basic ingredient of the school scene is the student. The entire Expanded Program was based upon the premise that the student should be served.

This meant increasing and implementing student-counselor contact, teacher-student contact, student-student contact, student input in planning, student government, etc.

Under the new counselor role, the student ratio was cut in half. The counselor was given the opportunity to work more thoroughly on individual student problems. He was also given the opportunity to make contact with all

students and to discuss general student adjustment. The previous student-counselor ratio at Northeast was 400:1. Under this program the ratio was reduced to 200:1.

Student problems could receive more intensified attention under this program. The old two-headed approach of the counselor and assistant principal created the impression of not caring because of time lapses in the disposition of student referrals. Immediate communication between the counselor and assistant principal was difficult under the old system.

The student was also given a greater voice in the program through the newly created seventh grade student council. The council held separate meetings and discussed items of seventh grade concern. Students were being given a greater hand in helping to operate the seventh grade program. The council responded to student suggestions in many areas including the planning of a dance, being a sounding board for student opinions, etc. Student council membership eligibility requirements were redefined to provide representation for practically all student groups.

Students were, for the first time, allowed to have a limited choice in subject areas during the year. Teachers created Student Elective Units of instruction within certain subject areas such as art, geography, English, science, and math. These units were offered on an hourly basis to students who had the subject that particular hour. If three sections of geography were taught first period, three Student Elective Units would be offered to the ninety students. The students did not change hours, but might change teachers and rooms based upon their choices. At first, student assignment was made by counselors and teachers. The teachers took over the physical problem of student assignment as the year progressed. These units varied from two weeks to eight weeks.

As a result of the program, students were given a greater input into after-school activities. Various school clubs were organized by teachers for seventh grade only. Such clubs as the Space Club, Rocket Club, etc. were started. Others, that in the past were sparsely attended by seventh graders, were emphasized.

A seventh grade newspaper was organized and published several times during the year. It was called "The Underground." The name came from the basement location of all English classes.

Perhaps one of the most unique outcomes of the program was the insight teachers received about their classes and the lives of their students through the use of "Circle Meetings." For these meetings the class was arranged in a double ring circle. The students and the teacher in the inner ring held a verbal interchange on either subject-oriented or rather "free wheeling" open topics. Some teachers used circle meetings periodically, while other teachers felt they were not worthwhile.

Compared with other years, the number of opportunities for student involvement was increased substantially.

Administrative Involvement

When the Pilot Plan was first offered to schools in the winter of 1969-70, the counseling staff at Northeast brought it to the attention of the principal, Chester Johnson. At that time, several other proposals were also in the planning stage for Northeast to be implemented in the fall of 1970. Mr. Johnson and Glen Sonnenberg, the assistant principal, decided to apply for the project.

At the Guidance Services Department, plans were pushed ahead for the implementation of the project in several schools by local funding. As has been previously mentioned, the teacher strike limited the chances for the implementation of the program anywhere. When Northeast was chosen, many meetings between

counselors and administrators at Northeast were held to discuss the implications of the program. The building administration gave its full support to the implementation of the program.

In the fall of 1970 a new principal, Walter J. Rock, came to Northeast. Meetings were held prior to the summer workshop and Mr. Rock encouraged the implementation of the new program. The building administration encouraged teacher participation, facilitated room reassignment, arranged a common preparation period for English and social studies teachers, scheduled basic subject teachers with seventh graders only, observed workshops, and generally gave praise and suggestions when and where needed. The requisitioning of new equipment was facilitated by the administration.

Grading

Perhaps no one single topic in education produces more heat and less light than grading and report cards. This was certainly true in the efforts to find a way to grade a student's work that would be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Expanded Program. The workshop participants spent much time reading the various articles and books written on this controversial area. There was some sentiment for retaining the traditional A, B, C, D and F report card on the grounds that it was was what students, teachers, and parents understood best. There was an equal amount of preference for a Pass-No Pass system because it seemed more in line with the junior high philosophy of exploration. As happens so often, a middle course was found which seemed to offer something for all concerned. It was a compromise which everyone could live with, even if it didn't offer everything that everyone wanted. A grading system emerged from the discussion that featured four grades:

A - Superior Proficiency

B - Above Average Proficiency

C - Proficiency

Conf. - Conference Required

It was immediately apparent that the most notable change was the elimination of the D and F grades. It was felt that more could be done for the student by requiring a conference between the teacher and the parent than by labeling the student a failure and then dropping the matter.

The conference, ideally, was a face-to-face meeting between teacher and parent where the problems could be identified and where courses of action could be outlined to improve student progress. In some cases, when it was impossible for parents to get to the school for this meeting, the conference was held by telephone. In any case, the teacher and parent communicated directly, and not through the highly subjective symbolism of the report card D and F.

The participants were convinced that in the overwhelming majority of cases the single greatest resource they had in dealing with any student was his parents. Other things being equal, the general feeling of teachers was that the more schools promote and encourage this communication, the greater will be the success with the student.

It was agreed that the Conference grade would not necessarily be final, but that subsequent to the parent conference, it could be changed to a C, B, or even an A, if certain conditions were met by a specified time. It was possible for some students to finish the year with four Conference grades. The staff was convinced that the only thing a student learns from a "Fail" is how to fail.

Communication

One very important aspect of the Expanded Program was vastly improved communication. The members of the workshop were convinced that if teachers

could freely and regularly exchange ideas the entire curriculum would experience a new and exciting vitality. The key factors in enhancing communication among teachers and between teachers and counselors were the arrangement of teaching schedules so that most academic teachers had seventh graders only and the arrangement of daily meetings in the common office area during the preparation period shared by many teachers in the program. This meeting time promoted an inter-change of ideas, not only on curriculum matters, but on sharing approaches and techniques in relating to individual students.

In addition, a faculty newsletter, Info-7, which was published twice a month, kept all teachers informed of future units to be taught in all departments and did much to encourage coordination between subject areas.

On the student level, communication was encouraged by the writing and publishing of a newspaper (for seventh graders only) called Underground-7.

Another device to keep students informed was Broadcast-7, a program sent out to seventh grade homerooms only on the school's public address system. With the help of a faculty adviser, it was planned and broadcast by the students themselves. It contained news of forthcoming special events planned by the various classes, as well as announcements of extra-curricular activities and club meetings.

In order to further promote a grade identity and pride, a Seventh Grade Council was formed. With elected representatives from each seventh grade homeroom it met periodically to deal with the problems and concerns of seventh graders. Each student elected to this body was also the representative of his homeroom to the all-school Student Council.

The staff was determined in all these efforts to keep the entire seventh grade, both teachers and students, fully informed about current happenings as well as future plans. The experience showed that time and effort spent on

keeping people informed pays rich dividends in teacher innovation, student interest, and group identity and pride.

Physical Facilities

During the spring and summer of 1970 a long-planned remodeling of the basement of Northeast was completed. It provided five new carpeted and air-conditioned classrooms. The new facilities were utilized to create a seventh grade area where all seventh grade students would have English and geography classes. Also, under the flexible classroom use, it provided a teacher office area.

A physical change that resulted directly from the program was the location of the seventh grade counselors' offices in an area separate from the regular school office area. All other program modifications were made within a standard school physical plant setting.

On-Going Evaluation

From the beginning of the program, it was understood that an evaluation was necessary to measure the impact of the program on the three groups most directly concerned -- students, teachers, and parents. For each of these groups there were opportunities for informal evaluation as the year progressed. In addition, at the end of the school year, each group responded to questionnaires designed by the Northeast staff and the Research and Evaluation Department of the Minneapolis Public Schools. The results of these questionnaires will be reported in a later section.

The on-going evaluation by students took place in the previously mentioned Glasser-type circle meetings. Teachers led relatively small groups of students in discussions that brought out what students liked about the program as well as the students' constructive criticisms. These meetings brought forth much

honest and frank comment on the program and helped the faculty to tap grass root opinions from the student body.

The on-going aspect of teacher evaluation was accomplished mainly during Tuesday release time meetings which afforded many opportunities for give and take on the value of the program, as well as the direction it should take. In addition a dinner meeting was held at a local restaurant in November, where teachers, meeting by departments, replied to a previously prepared questionnaire. The results were summarized and proved most valuable in charting a course for the second semester.

A seventh-grade parent night was held early in the school year to explain all aspects of the program. There was ample opportunity during the evening for parent-teacher communication during the informal "coffee hour dialogue." The great majority of the parents expressed their approval of the goals and objectives of the new program and pledged their support.

Informal evaluation was also done by the administrative staff of the Minneapolis Public Schools. The Superintendent, Dr. John B. Davis, met informally with the Seventh Grade faculty after spending a morning observing the program. He expressed his appreciation for the effort being made by the Northeast staff to find more effective ways to make the junior high experience meaningful for our students.

Both Mr. Nathaniel Ober, the Associate Superintendent for Secondary Education, and Dr. Ralph Johnson, Director of Guidance Services, visited the program several times during the year and offered their encouragement and support.

Positive Outcomes

Looking back on the Expanded Program at the end of its first year, one looks for signs of significant change - some evidence that the plans and hopes

of the previous Spring have had some real impact on the school.

At first glance, one positive outcome looms like a mountain over the others. It is a spirit of innovation - a real willingness to take a good, long look at what educators have done in the past and ask "Are we <u>really</u> meeting the needs of junior high students, <u>as they are</u>, or are we merely meeting <u>our own needs</u> by following the educational policies and traditions of the past?"

To face this question, honestly, and then do something about it, calls for varying degrees of sacrifice on the part of an entire faculty. Each teacher has to be willing to give up what is comfortable and secure for him in his class in order to find more realistic and effective ways of meeting the needs of <u>all</u> the students.

The Northeast faculty, as a whole, has demonstrated a willingness and an ability to do this to a degree that must be most encouraging to anyone committed to more effective education.

The staff has learned from the experience that to be willing to innovate is an exhilarating experience. Innovation implies risk, but it also assures the satisfaction that comes from making an honest effort - win or lose.

This satisfaction, alone, would have been worth the effort, but the staff also learned to trust each other's judgment and to respect each other's abilities in a way that would not have been possible in a more traditional school setting.

Trying to assess the impact of the program on the students is not as easy a task, since, as seventh graders new to the school, they had no previous experience in a traditional junior high program. Aside from the students' own comments on the formal questionnaires, the evaluation depended heavily on teacher and parent opinion, though admittedly subjective in nature. Both of these groups mentioned such positive outcomes as "greater student interest in

school" and "greater student pride in their grade" than they had seen previously.

Since the Expanded Program was designed, implemented, and participated in by human beings, the program did not solve all of our educational problems, but it convinced those involved that we have taken a good first step. The experience is recommended to others.

Future of the Program

The results of the evaluation did point out the success of the program. Possible expansion was discussed. A commitment for the expansion of the program into grade eight for the 1971-72 school year was received after the Northeast eighth grade faculty wrote a letter requesting its expansion.

Funds for a workshop were appropriated to be held in August, 1971.

A Federal Project was written for Title III ESEA funds to expand the program to several other schools. In the spring of 1971 funds were allocated to expand the program, with individual building modifications, to Marshall-University Junior High School and Jordan Junior High School.

End-of-the-Year Evaluation[1]

Reactions of staff, students, and parents to the 1970-71 Seventh Grade Expanded Program at Northeast Junior High were gathered near the end of the school year using instruments developed locally for that purpose. The questionnaires for teachers and students had two sections. One section requested reactions to special aspects of the seventh grade program: grading systems, student electives, and circle meetings. In the other section, teachers and students responded to items regarding the role and effectiveness of the counselor. A one-page questionnaire requesting general reactions to

[1]This evaluation section was written by Lary Johnson, a staff member of the Minneapolis Public Schools' Research and Evaluation Department.

the seventh grade program was mailed home to all parents. Copies of the questionnaires are in Appendix A.

Since an important part of the program involved a change in the counselor's role in working with teachers and students, a comparison group of four seventh grade counselors at other Minneapolis schools was established. The four comparison counselors agreed to ask the seventh grade teachers and the seventh grade students in their schools to complete the section of the Northeast questionnaire dealing with counselor role and effectiveness. The students at the four comparison schools were fairly similar to the Northeast students on variables such as city-wide test results and socio-economic level.

On many variables the comparison counselors appeared to be similar to the counselors at Northeast. However, there were some important differences between the comparison and Northeast counselors and between the situations in which they worked. All comparison counselors were women and the two Northeast counselors were men. The student-counselor ratio for the comparison counselors was about 400 to 1, compared with about 200 to 1 for the Northeast counselors. In the four comparison schools, an assistant principal was available as a resource person in the area of student behavior management. Also, the comparison counselors probably were not working in a situation that put as much emphasis on or made as many provisions for the type of working relationship that existed between counselors and teachers at Northeast.

Results

The results of the evaluation will be presented in five sections: Teacher Response to Counselors, Student Response to Counselors, Teacher Response to Program, Student Response to Program, and Parent Response to Program.

Teacher Response to Counselors

There were differences between teachers at Northeast and teachers at the four comparison schools regarding their perceptions of the value of the seventh grade counselors and the kind of working relationship that existed between the teachers and counselors. On an overall rating of counselor effectiveness, 81% of the Northeast teachers, compared with 51% of the teachers in the other four schools, rated the seventh grade counselor as having been very helpful (Table 1). All seventh grade teachers at Northeast and about two-thirds of the seventh grade teachers at the comparison school responded.

Table 1

Seventh Grade Teachers' Overall Rating of Counselor Effectiveness at Northeast and Comparison Schools

	Northeast N=27 Percent	Comparison Schools N=67 Percent
Very helpful	81%	51%
Somewhat helpful	15	39
Not very helpful	4	6
Of no help	0	4

Table 2 on page 19 indicates the number of times the counselor worked with the teacher in several areas as reported by the teachers. Compared with counselors in the four other schools, the counselors at Northeast had a greater number of contacts with teachers in all areas except active participation in classroom activities (area 5).

Teachers who worked with the counselor in any particular area at least one time rated how helpful the counselor had been in that area (Table 3, page 20). Some differences between Northeast counselors and the comparison counselors occurred. The comparison counselors were rated more helpful than Northeast counselors when they actively participated in classroom activities and when

Table 2

Frequency That Counselor Worked with Teacher in Several Areas as Reported by the Teachers (Northeast N=27; Comparison Schools N=74)[a]

Area The Counselor:	School	More Than Ten Times N	%	5-10 Times N	%	Once or Twice N	%	Never N	%
1. Provided information about individual students	Northeast	16	59	10	37	1	4	0	0
	Comparison	27	38	26	37	15	21	3	4
2. Provided a resource for referral of students who needed special help	Northeast	4	15	11	42	10	38	1	4
	Comparison	5	8	18	28	27	42	15	23
3. Offered suggestions that helped me cope with students who were not adjusting to class	Northeast	2	7	15	56	9	33	1	4
	Comparison	4	6	19	27	35	50	12	17
4. Observed the Classroom	Northeast	2	7	7	26	14	52	4	15
	Comparison	3	4	9	13	29	41	29	41
5. Actively participated in classroom activities and group discussions	Northeast	0	0	0	0	6	22	21	78
	Comparison	0	0	1	1	14	20	55	79
6. Participated with teachers in conferences concerning students with problems	Northeast	3	11	14	52	10	37	0	0
	Comparison	13	18	21	29	27	38	11	15
7. Suggested or cooperatively planned activities and methods to develop appropriate classroom atmosphere	Northeast	0	0	3	11	12	44	12	44
	Comparison	2	3	6	9	15	21	47	67
8. Suggested or cooperatively planned curriculum to meet the needs of students	Northeast	1	4	5	19	4	15	17	63
	Comparison	3	4	5	7	10	14	51	74

[a] Some teachers did not respond to all areas; therefore, Ns will not always equal 27 and 74.

Table 3

Helpfulness of Counselors in Several Areas as Reported by Teachers Who Worked With the Counselor at Least Once in That Area (Northeast N=27; Comparison Schools N=74)

Area The Counselor:	School	Number of Teachers Who Worked With Counselor N	%	Very Helpful N	%	Somewhat Helpful N	%	No Help N	%
1. Provided information about individual students	Northeast	27	100	21	78	6	22	0	0
	Comparison	68	96	35	54	28	43	2	3
2. Provided a resource for referral of students who needed special help	Northeast	25	93	13	52	12	48	0	0
	Comparison	50	78	25	52	22	46	1	2
3. Offered suggestions that helped me cope with students who were not adjusting to class	Northeast	26	96	12	46	14	54	0	0
	Comparison	58	83	22	40	30	55	3	5
4. Observed the classroom	Northeast	23	85	5	24	5	24	11	52
	Comparison	41	58	9	25	13	36	14	39
5. Actively participated in classroom activities and group discussions	Northeast	6	22	1	17	4	67	1	17
	Comparison	15	21	6	46	4	31	3	23
6. Participated with teachers in conferences concerning students with problems	Northeast	27	100	18	67	8	30	1	3
	Comparison	61	85	28	47	30	51	1	2
7. Suggested or cooperatively planned activities and methods to develop appropriate classroom atmosphere	Northeast	15	56	4	27	11	73	0	0
	Comparison	23	33	9	43	9	43	3	14
8. Suggested or cooperatively planned curriculum to meet the needs of students	Northeast	10	37	5	56	3	33	1	11
	Comparison	18	25	9	53	5	29	3	18

[a] In a few cases, teachers did not rate degree of help; helpfulness percentages were calculated on the basis of the number of teachers who rated on helpfulness.

they suggested or cooperatively planned methods to develop appropriate classroom atmosphere. Northeast counselors were rated more helpful than comparison counselors when they provided information about individual students and when they participated with teachers in conferences concerning students with problems.

For seven of the eight areas, the majority of teachers at both Northeast and the comparison schools indicated that teachers and counselors should be working together in that area (Table 4, page 22). The one area without a majority was "active participation in classroom activities."

The more traditional teacher-counselor relationships represented by areas 1, 2, 3, and 6 were accepted by almost all teachers as potentially beneficial relationships (Table 4) and were undertaken at least one time by most teacher-counselor pairs (Table 3). The percentage of teachers at Northeast who worked with counselors in these areas was somewhat greater than the percentage of teachers at the comparison schools who worked with counselors in these areas.

In somewhat nontraditional areas of counselor-teacher working relationships, about two-thirds of both Northeast and comparison teachers said counselors should help plan activities and methods to develop the appropriate classroom atmosphere and should help plan the curriculum. In these two team approaches, neither the Northeast counselors nor the comparison counselors worked with as many teachers as thought it was appropriate. However, a greater percentage of Northeast teachers than comparison teachers worked with the counselor this past school year in these two areas.

In summary, three points stand out.

1. A greater percentage of teachers at Northeast than teachers at the comparison schools said the counselor worked with them in the following areas: provided information about individual students, provided a resource for referral of students who needed special help, offered suggestions to help cope with students, observed the classroom, participated in case conferences, and helped plan activities and methods to develop appropriate classroom atmosphere.

Table 4

Teachers' Opinions as to Whether Counselors and Teachers Should Work Together in Several Areas

Area The Counselor:	School	Yes N	Yes %	No N	No %	No Answer N
1. Provided information about individual students	Northeast	27	100	0	0	0
	Comparison	71	100	0	0	3
2. Provided a resource for referral of students who needed special help	Northeast	25	96	1	4	1
	Comparison	67	97	2	3	5
3. Offered suggestions that helped me cope with students who were not adjusting to class	Northeast	27	100	0	0	0
	Comparison	69	95	4	5	0
4. Observed the classroom	Northeast	22	85	4	15	1
	Comparison	45	68	21	32	7
5. Actively participated in classroom activities and group discussions	Northeast	12	50	12	50	2
	Comparison	29	47	33	53	12
6. Participated with teachers in conferences concerning students with problems	Northeast	26	100	0	0	1
	Comparison	68	99	1	1	5
7. Suggested or cooperatively planned activities and methods to develop appropriate classroom atmosphere	Northeast	16	73	6	27	5
	Comparison	41	63	24	37	9
8. Suggested or cooperatively planned curriculum to meet the needs of students	Northeast	16	67	8	33	3
	Comparison	39	62	24	38	11

2. Both teachers at Northeast and teachers at the comparison schools would like to work more closely and in more ways with the counselors.

3. Of those teachers who worked with counselors, and comparing Northeast and comparison counselors, neither Northeast counselors nor comparison counselors were seen as being consistently more helpful in all areas.

Eighty-five percent of the teachers at Northeast said the counselors' handling of behavior problems was almost always effective or usually effective (Table 5). Seventy-eight percent of the teachers preferred counselor handling over assistant principal handling of behavior problems. The two teachers who responsed "Other" stated a preference for a cooperative teacher-counselor method.

Table 5

Northeast Teachers' Ratings of Counselors' Handling of Behavior Problems

Question	Response	Teachers N=27 N	%
How would you rate the counselors' methods of handling students with behavior problems?	Almost always effective	10	37%
	Usually effective	13	48
	Occasionally effective	4	15
	Rarely effective	0	0
What structure do you prefer?	Counselor handling of student behavior problems	21	78
	Assistant principal handling of student behavior problems	0	0
	No difference	4	15
	Other	2	7

Student Response to Counselors

Since the counselors at Northeast assumed the decision-making role regarding the final disposition of student adjustment problems, student reactions and attitudes toward counselors were surveyed quite thoroughly. Questionnaires

were completed by 351 seventh graders at Northeast Junior High and 981 seventh graders at the four comparison schools.

Some differences between Northeast and the four comparison schools occurred regarding general types of student-counselor contacts. Table 6 on page 25 shows that a slightly greater percentage of students in the comparison schools, compared with Northeast students, talked with their counselor in his office. A slightly greater percentage of Northeast students than comparison students said their counselor visited their classroom, and Northeast students said they more frequently saw their counselor in the school hallways during the year. There was no difference between the percentage of Northeast students and comparison students who voluntarily went to the counselors' office.

Some differences between Northeast students and comparison students regarding the areas or situations that were discussed during the counselor-student contact also occurred (Table 7).

A greater percentage of comparison school students (37%) than Northeast students (12%) said they talked with their counselor about their abilities, interests, and test scores. Although percentages were small for both groups, a greater percentage of comparison students also reported talks with their counselor in the areas of "planning my classes for next year" and "understanding myself." A greater percentage of Northeast students than comparison students had contacts with their counselor regarding trouble they had with school rules and problems with other students.

Table 6

Amount of Contact that Seventh Grade Students Had With Their Counselor at Northeast Junior High and Four Comparison Schools

Question	Response	Northeast N=351 Percent	Comp Schools N=981 Percent
How often have you talked with your counselor in his office this year?	Never	20%	14%
	One time	25	26
	2-5 times	39	44
	More than 5	14	16
Did you ever go to the counselor's office on your own...that is, when you were not sent or asked to come to his office?	Yes	56	53
	No	44	47
How often have you seen your counselor in the school hallways this year?	Almost every day	66	42
	About once a week	23	30
	About once a month	3	12
	Once or twice a year	5	12
	Never	3	4
How often has your counselor visited your classroom this year?	Almost every day	0	3
	About once a week	15	16
	About once a month	36	25
	Once or twice a year	47	45
	Never	1	12
How often have you talked about important things with your counselor outside his office?	Never	69	69
	One time	18	18
	2-5 times	10	11
	More than 5	3	2

Table 7

Percentage of Student-Counselor Talks in Various Areas for Students Who Have Talked With Their Counselor at Northeast Junior High And Four Comparison Schools

	Northeast N=280 Percent	Comp Schools N=844 Percent
My abilities, interests, test scores	12%	37%
Planning my classes for next year	4	18
Program changes for this year	33	29
Problems with schoolwork	25	23
Understanding myself	4	15
Trouble I had with school rules	22	10
Problems I had with a teacher	35	32
Career and job possibilities for me in later life	1	5
Just to talk awhile	31	41
Problems I had with other students	31	19

At Northeast, 28% of the seventh graders said they had talked with their counselor because they had broken school rules, compared with 13% of the students at the four comparison schools (Table 8, page 27). There were marked differences in how the students described these talks regarding broken school rules (Table 9, page 27). Thirty-one percent of the Northeast students compared with 18% of the comparison students said they were bawled out. A much greater percentage of comparison students (60%) than Northeast students (36%) thought the counselor was interested in hearing what they had to say. However, the Northeast counselors appeared to put more emphasis on student responsibility for dealing with the situation. Compared with students in the

Table 8

Percentage of Students in Grade Seven Who Have Talked With Their Counselor Because They've Broken School Rules at Northeast Junior High and Four Comparison Schools

Question	Response	Northeast N=351 Percent	Comp Schools N=981 Percent
Have you ever talked with your counselor because you've broken the school rules?	Never	72%	87%
	One time	17	9
	2-5 times	8	3
	More than 5	3	1

Table 9

Seventh Grade Students' Description of Student-Counselor Talks About Breaking School Rules at Northeast Junior High and Four Comparison Schools

Check any of the following that describes your talks with the counselor about breaking school rules	Northeast N=97 Percent	Comp Schools N=125 Percent
I was bawled out	31%	18%
The counselor was interested in hearing what I had to say	36	60
I was afraid when I left the Counselor's office	11	6
Together we tried to figure out a way for me to stay out of trouble	51	46
I found out it was up to me if I was going to stay out of trouble	48	38
We had a nice talk about why I broke the rules	41	40
I was suspended	15	4

other four schools, a greater percentage of Northeast students said they tried to figure out a way to stay out of trouble, and that they found out it was up to them if they were going to stay out of trouble. Only a small percentage of students at both Northeast and the comparison schools reported being afraid when they left the counselor's office.

Northeast students and comparison students had different perceptions of the counselor's job (Table 10, page 29). A greater percentage of students at the comparison schools (74%) than students at Northeast (57%) said it was the counselor's job to help students plan and select their classes. More Northeast students than students at the comparison schools indicated that it was the counselor's job to discipline students when they're in trouble, to help teachers grade students, and to suspend students when they're in trouble. The students at Northeast apparently recognized the changed counselor's role that included responsiblility for possible disciplinary action.

Although there were differences between Northeast students and comparison students regarding the types of contacts they had with their counselor and differences regarding the students' perceptions of the counselor's job, there were very few differences between the two groups of students regarding their perceptions of the relationship between students and counselors.

Table 11 on pages 30 and 31 indicates the students' perceptions of the counselor on a number of personal and relationship variables. On items that attempted to tap Understanding, Interest-Concern, Liking, and Manipulative Control variables, there was little difference between Northeast and comparison students. More than 80% of both Northeast and comparison seventh graders reported that their counselor understood them, was interested in how they looked at things, and was friendly and warm toward them. Although 92% of the students in both groups said the counselor always gave them a chance to explain their

Table 10

Seventh Grade Students' Perceptions of the Counselor's Job at Northeast Junior High and Four Comparison Schools

Are the following activities part of the counselor's job?	Response	Northeast N=351 Percent	Comp Schools N=981 Percent
Help students get along with other students	Yes	71%	80%
	No	12	7
	Don't Know	17	13
Helps students plan and select their classes	Yes	57	74
	No	22	12
	Don't know	21	14
Disciplines students when they're in trouble	Yes	58	38
	No	17	40
	Don't know	25	22
Helps students understand themselves	Yes	74	81
	No	11	7
	Don't know	15	13
Helps students improve their schoolwork	Yes	62	61
	No	16	19
	Don't know	22	20
Helps teachers grade the students	Yes	28	11
	No	41	56
	Don't know	31	33
Suspends students when they're in trouble	Yes	41	13
	No	24	62
	Don't know	35	24
Helps students who have personal and social concerns such as feeling left out, shyness, trouble with family...	Yes	64	68
	No	12	12
	Don't know	24	20
Helps students get along with teachers	Yes	74	75
	No	10	9
	Don't know	16	17

Table 11

Seventh Grade Students' Perceptions of the Counselor at Northeast Junior High and Four Comparison Schools

		Response	Northeast All Students N=351 Percent	Comp Schools All Students N=981 Percent
	Understanding			
1.	He tries to see things the way I do and to understand how I feel.	Strongly Agree	40%	33%
		Agree	52	58
		Disagree	6	7
		Strongly Disagree	2	2
2.	He understands me	Strongly Agree	22	23
		Agree	59	58
		Disagree	15	13
		Strongly Disagree	5	5
	Interest-Concern			
3.	He is interested in knowing how I look at things	Strongly Agree	29	28
		Agree	59	60
		Disagree	10	8
		Strongly Disagree	3	3
4.	He hurries me through my business with him	Strongly Agree	7	3
		Agree	10	11
		Disagree	51	57
		Strongly Disagree	32	29
5.	I often feel that he has more important things to do when I am talking to him.	Strongly Agree	7	9
		Agree	22	23
		Disagree	42	41
		Strongly Disagree	30	27
	Liking			
6.	He doesn't seem to like me very much	Strongly Agree	4	3
		Agree	9	6
		Disagree	43	53
		Strongly Disagree	44	38
7.	I feel comfortable talking with the counselor about myself	Strongly Agree	16	20
		Agree	42	46
		Disagree	28	25
		Strongly Disagree	14	9
8.	He is friendly and warm toward me	Strongly Agree	23	25
		Agree	57	60
		Disagree	14	12
		Strongly Disagree	6	3
9.	I enjoy talking with my counselor	Strongly Agree	31	29
		Agree	49	53
		Disagree	13	15
		Strongly Disagree	7	4

Table 11 (continued)

		Response	Northeast All Students N=351 Percent	Comp Schools All Students N=981 Percent
	Control-Manipulative			
10.	He likes to tell people what to do	Strongly Agree	4	4
		Agree	20	21
		Disagree	58	55
		Strongly Disagree	18	20
11.	He tells his opinions more than I want to know them	Strongly Agree	7	5
		Agree	20	20
		Disagree	59	57
		Strongly Disagree	14	17
12.	He always gives me a change to explain my side of things	Strongly Agree	46	39
		Agree	46	53
		Disagree	7	6
		Strongly Disagree	2	2
13.	He usually tells me what I should do rather than letting me decide for myself	Strongly Agree	6	5
		Agree	25	18
		Disagree	46	51
		Strongly Disagree	23	26
14.	He tries to get me to be responsible for what I do	Strongly Agree	30	17
		Agree	50	58
		Disagree	15	20
		Strongly Disagree	5	6
	Congruence			
15.	It is hard for me to know what he is really like as a person	Strongly Agree	9	9
		Agree	35	30
		Disagree	46	46
		Strongly Disagree	11	16
16.	I feel that he is honest with me; he says what he <u>really</u> thinks or feels	Strongly Agree	41	31
		Agree	52	55
		Disagree	6	11
		Strongly Disagree	2	3
	Approach			
17.	I am afraid to go to the counselor when I am in trouble in school	Strongly Agree	9	6
		Agree	25	15
		Disagree	43	48
		Strongly Disagree	23	31
18.	I would go to the counselor on my own if I need help	Strongly Agree	42	38
		Agree	44	48
		Disagree	9	11
		Strongly Disagree	5	3
19.	Being called to the counselor probably means I have done something wrong	Strongly Agree	15	7
		Agree	19	15
		Disagree	39	45
		Strongly Disagree	27	33

side of things, about 25% of the students indicated that the counselor tried to tell them what to do.

The earlier noted student perception of the changed role of the counselor at Northeast also was evident on the Approach items. About one-third of the Northeast students, in contrast with one-fifth of the comparison students, said they were afraid to go to the counselor when they were in trouble in school and that being called to the counselor probably means they have done something wrong. However, there was no difference between the percentage of Northeast and comparison students (86%) who said they would go to the counselor on their own if they needed help.

On an overall rating of counselor effectiveness, 57% of both Northeast students and comparison school students stated that counselors were very helpful to students (Table 12).

Table 12

Overall Rating of Counselor Effectiveness by Seventh Graders at Northeast Junior High and Four Comparison Schools

Question	Response	Northeast N=351 Percent	Comp Schools N=981 Percent
Overall, do you think the counselor is a helpful person to students?	Very helpful to students	57%	57%
	Sometime helpful to students	30	27
	I don't know	11	15
	More harmful than helpful to students	2	1

In summary, seventh grade students at Northeast Junior High and seventh grade students at four comparison junior highs had similar feelings regarding the helpfulness of their counselor and had similar feelings toward the counselor on a number of personal and relationship variables. Some differences

between the two groups of students occurred regarding the type of contact they had with the counselor and the students' perception of the counselor's job.

Teacher Response to Program

Teacher reactions to special aspects of the seventh grade program at Northeast are given for three groups of teachers in Table 13; English or social studies teachers, Other teachers (not English or social studies), and all teachers.

About 75% of both English-Social-Studies and Other teachers reported that they worked harder and tried more innovative techniques than in previous years (items 2, 13).

All English-Social-Studies teachers and about two-thirds of the Other teachers said they emphasized the discussion-inquiry method of learning (item 15). Many teachers said they taught more process learning than in previous years (item 14). Correspondingly, about three-fourths of the English-Social-Studies teachers and about one-half of the Other teachers reported that they used open book tests this year and that less objective testing was done than in previous years (items 4, 5).

Teachers indicated that they attempted to coordinate their curriculum with other subjects (items 6, 17), and that they liked the opportunity this year's program gave them to work more closely with other teachers (item 3). English-Social-Studies teachers responded more positively to these items than the Other teachers.

English-Social-Studies teachers thought the use of student electives was successful and would like them continued next year (items 9, 19). Four of five Other teachers who used the student electives said they were successful. A number of the Other teachers indicated they would like to begin student

Table 13

Seventh Grade Teachers Reactions to
The Expanded Seventh Grade Program

	Question	Response	English or Social Studies Teachers (N=8) N	%	Other Teachers (N=19) N	%	All Teachers (N=27) N	%
1.	I think most teachers this year have tried to maintain a positive attitude toward students.	Yes	8	100	19	100	27	100
		No	0	0	0	0	0	0
		DNA	0	0	0	0	0	0
2.	I think I have worked harder this year in teaching than in previous years.	Yes	5	71	14	78	19	76
		No	2	29	3	17	5	20
		DNA	0	0	1	6	1	4
3.	I like the opportunity this year's program has given me to work more closely with other teachers.	Yes	7	88	11	58	18	67
		No	0	0	1	5	1	4
		DNA	1	13	7	37	8	30
4.	I have done less objective testing this year than in previous years.	Yes	6	75	7	41	13	52
		No	1	13	9	53	10	40
		DNA	1	13	1	6	2	8
5.	I have used open book tests this year.	Yes	6	75	10	53	16	59
		No	0	0	5	26	5	19
		DNA	2	25	4	21	6	22
6.	I have tried to coordinate homework assignments with other subjects.	Yes	7	88	8	42	15	56
		No	0	0	4	21	4	15
		DNA	1	13	7	37	8	30

[a]DNA = Does Not Apply. Percentages were calculated only on Yes and No responses.

(Table13 continued)

	Question	Response	English or Social Studies Teachers (N=8) N	%	Other Teachers (N=19) N	%	All Teachers (N=27) N	%
7.	I have held class (circle) meetings in my classes this year.	Yes	5	63	6	33	11	42
		No	3	38	11	61	14	54
		DNA	0	0	1	6	1	4
8.	I think having counselors, social workers, and other non-teaching personnel visit my classes is a valuable experience for everyone.	Yes	6	86	17	94	23	92
		No	1	14	0	0	1	4
		DNA	0	0	1	6	1	4
9.	The use of Student Elective Units in the courses I teach has been a successful experience.	Yes	7	88	4	21	11	41
		No	0	0	1	5	1	4
		DNA	1	13	14	74	15	56
10.	Generally speaking, I like the new report grading system (A, B, C. and Conf.)	Yes	5	63	5	28	10	38
		No	3	38	13	72	16	62
		DNA	0	0	0	0	0	0
11.	I feel this year's program has promoted more and better contacts between myself and the parents of my students.	Yes	3	43	8	42	11	42
		No	4	57	11	58	15	58
		DNA	0	0	0	0	0	0
12.	I have a closer more personal relationship with my students this year than in previous years.	Yes	4	50	9	47	13	48
		No	3	38	10	53	13	48
		DNA	1	13	0	0	1	4
13.	I have tried more innovative teaching methods this year than in previous years.	Yes	6	75	13	72	19	73
		No	1	13	4	22	5	19
		DNA	1	13	1	6	2	8

(Table 13continued)

Question	Response	English or Social Studies Teachers (N=8) N	%	Other Teachers (N=19) N	%	All Teachers (N=27) N	%
14. I have taught more process learning (as opposed to factual learning) this year than in previous years.	Yes	6	75	9	47	15	56
	No	1	13	6	32	7	26
	DNA	1	13	4	21	5	19
15. I have tried to place an emphasis on the discussion--inquiry method of learning.	Yes	8	100	12	63	20	74
	No	0	0	3	16	3	11
	DNA	0	0	4	21	4	15
16. I find INFO=7 valuable.	Yes	7	100	16	89	23	92
	No	0	0	1	6	1	4
	DNA	0	0	1	6	1	4
17. I have coordinated my curriculum with other teachers.	Yes	6	75	7	39	13	50
	No	1	13	9	50	10	38
	DNA	1	13	2	11	3	12
18. I have found class (circle) meetings to be a valuable use of class time.	Yes	3	43	4	22	7	28
	No	3	43	7	39	10	40
	DNA	1	14	7	39	8	32
19. I would like to continue or begin the use of Student Elective Units in my classes next year.	Yes	6	75	10	53	16	59
	No	0	0	3	16	3	11
	DNA	2	25	6	32	8	30
20. The new report grading system seems to encourage students, in a positive way, toward better performance.	Yes	5	71	7	41	12	50
	No	2	29	9	53	11	46
	DNA	0	0	1	6	1	4
21. I would like to have more training in conducting circle meetings.	Yes	6	75	10	56	16	62
	No	2	25	6	33	8	31
	DNA	0	0	2	11	2	8

elective courses.

Two-thirds of the English-Social-Studies teachers and one-third of the Other teachers said they held Glasser-type circle meetings in their classes during the year (item 7). About 40% of all teachers who held circle meetings felt they were a valuable use of time (items 18). About two-thirds of all teachers indicated a desire to have more training in conducting circle meetings (item 21).

The majority of English-Social-Studies teachers liked the new grading system and felt it encouraged students, in a positive way, toward better performance (items 10, 20). The majority of teachers in areas other than English and social studies did not like the A, B, C, Conference grading system.

About one-half of all teachers indicated better relationships and contacts with parents and students this year (items 11, 12).

In summary, the innovative aspects of the Northeast seventh grade program were viewed favorably by the majority of the teachers. Teachers (English and social studies) who worked closely with certain aspects of the program responded more positively than teachers who were not as closely involved with the program.

Student Response to Program

Student reactions to special aspects of the seventh grade program at Northeast are given in Table 14 on pages 38 and 39.

More than one-half of the students said they participated in class circle meetings (item 5), only one-fourth said the circle meetings were not a good use of class time (item 10), and more than two-thirds said they would like circle meetings in more of their classes next year (item 15).

Eighty-five percent of the students would like to see the student electives continued next year (item 6), while only 31% thought electives should be longer in order to have fewer class changes (item 11).

Table 14

Northeast Seventh Grade Students' Reactions
to the Seventh Grade Expanded Program

Question	Response[a]	All Students N=351	Students' Ratings of Academic Achievement: Excellent Above Ave. N=149	Average N=173	Below Ave. Very Low N=23
1. In most cases, I am treated fairly by my teachers.	SA	18%	24%	13%	9%
	A	63	61	64	65
	D	12	9	15	17
	SD	7	5	9	9
2. Open book examination more accurately test what I have learned about a subject than closed book exams.	SA	25	25	25	22
	A	38	32	41	48
	D	31	34	28	22
	SD	7	9	5	9
3. I have been involved in the planning of several units in various subjects	SA	6	3	8	0
	A	34	36	34	14
	D	45	48	43	43
	SD	16	12	16	43
4. I have been involved in several class (or circle) meetings this year.	SA	15	15	16	5
	A	41	51	36	15
	D	32	26	36	45
	SD	12	9	13	35
5. I think counselors should visit classrooms frequently.	SA	31	33	29	25
	A	48	53	48	25
	D	17	13	18	35
	SD	5	1	6	15
6. I would like to see Student Elective Units continued in my classes next year.	SA	57	61	57	32
	A	28	27	25	55
	D	10	7	11	9
	SD	5	4	7	5
7. Generally, I like the new report card grading system (A, B, C, and Conf.)	SA	42	39	48	26
	A	22	26	18	26
	D	9	10	10	0
	SD	27	26	24	48
8. School rules are <u>not</u> enforced fairly.	SA	12	8	12	18
	A	22	25	21	18
	D	47	49	45	55
	SD	19	18	21	9

[a] SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly Disagree

Table 14 (continued)

Question	Response[a]	All Students N=351	Students' Ratings of Academic Achievement: Excellent Above Ave. N=149	Average N=173	Below Ave. Very Low N=23
9. The amount of homework I have had this year has been about right.	SA	26%	26%	26%	30%
	A	42	43	45	22
	D	18	20	14	30
	SD	14	11	14	17
10. The circle meetings I did participate in were not a good use of class time.	SA	9	13	6	10
	A	17	13	19	20
	D	40	44	37	35
	SD	33	28	38	35
11. I think Student Elective Units should be longer in length so that fewer changes in class assignments are made.	SA	11	9	12	19
	A	20	10	27	19
	D	39	50	28	48
	SD	30	30	33	14
12. I don't think the new report card grading is fair.	SA	15	12	17	17
	A	13	14	12	22
	D	32	36	27	35
	SD	40	39	44	26
13. I like the opportunity to change teachers several times during the year.	SA	57	59	55	61
	A	30	28	30	39
	D	10	10	11	0
	SD	3	3	4	0
14. I understand the reason for most of my homework assignments.	SA	15	17	13	13
	A	50	49	52	43
	D	23	26	21	26
	SD	12	9	13	17
15. I would like circle meeting in more of my classes next year.	SA	31	29	33	26
	A	39	42	39	30
	D	19	18	18	22
	SD	11	11	9	22
16. I like the "Conf." grade instead of having D's and Fails.	SA	31	29	33	26
	A	32	37	29	26
	D	13	14	11	22
	SD	24	20	27	26
17. I would like to have my parents have the opportunity to talk more often with my teachers.	SA	12	14	11	9
	A	28	34	23	26
	D	24	28	22	13
	SD	37	24	44	52

The majority of the students had favorable views of the new grading system. About two-thirds of the students liked the new A, B, C, Conference system and two-thirds of the students thought it was fair (items 7, 12, 16).

Most students (81%) said they were treated fairly by the teachers (item 1), 63% of the students thought open book exams more accurately tested what they had learned (item 2), and 40% of the Northeast seventh graders said they had been involved in planning several units in various subjects (item 3).

In summary, seventh graders at Northeast responded positively to the new aspects of the expanded seventh grade program.

Table 15

Parent Response to the Seventh Grade Expanded Program at Northeast Junior High April 1971

Question	Yes Percent	No Percent	Not Sure Percent
1. Generally speaking, I have been satisfied with the adjustment of my son/daughter to seventh grade this year.	93%	4%	3%
2. When I have had contact with the school, I have received action on my request.	93	5	2
3. I believe the grading system of A, B, C, and Conf. is an improvement over the system A, B, C, D, F.	75	11	14
4. The use of Student Electives in several subjects such as English, geography, art, etc. has made my son/daughter more interested in school and specific subjects.	79	5	15
5. Generally speaking, I believe the program has succeeded with my child and I would like to see it continued.	86	4	9

Parent Response to Program

Questionnaires were returned by 213 or about one-half of the seventh grade parents. The response to the program was very favorable (Table 15 on page 40). No information as to whether or not this sample of returns is biased in the positive direction is available.

The 131 parents who had children who attended seventh grade at Northeast Junior High before 1970-71, were asked to compare the 1970-71 program with the seventh grade program their other children had had at Northeast. Sixty-nine percent of the parents said this year's program was better, 9% said it was not as good, and 26% said it was the same.

Summary of End-of-the-Year Evaluation

Reactions of students and teachers to the role and effectiveness of the counselor and to special aspects of the seventh grade program were gathered at the end of the school year using locally developed questionnaires. Teachers and students from four other junior high schools were used as comparison groups.

Compared with teachers in the other four schools, teachers at Northeast reported more contacts with the counselor in a number of areas. On an overall rating of effectiveness, 81% of the Northeast teachers and 51% of the comparison teachers said the counselor was very helpful. The innovative aspects of the Northeast Program were viewed favorably by the teachers, particularly by those who were more closely involved with the program.

Students at Northeast and students at the comparison schools had similar responses regarding the helpfulness of their counselor on a number of personal and relationship variables. Differences between the two groups of students occurred regarding the type of contact they had with the counselor and the students' perception of the counselor's job. These differences corresponded

to the changed counselor's role at Northeast that included responsibility for possible disciplinary action. As with the teachers, the seventh graders at Northeast responded positively to the new aspects of the expanded program.

About one-half of the parents of Northeast seventh graders returned a questionnaire that was mailed home. The reaction of those responding was very favorable. About 90% of the parents were satisfied with the program.

Appendix A

Copies of the Teacher,
Student and Parent Questionnaires

Minneapolis Public Schools

Guidance Services Department

Teacher Evaluation
of the
Junior High Counseling Program

Teachers: Answer the questions on these two pages as thoughtfully as possible. It is very important that all your answers are in reference to only the counselor(s) working at the grade level indicated in item (1).

(1) _____Grade level of counselor(s) to whom all of the following questions and answers will refer.

(2-3) _____Leave blank for keypunch

(4) In which area do you spend most of your teaching time?

_____1. English or social studies

_____2. An area other than English or social studies. (Do not specify which area if you checked 2)

(5) Overall, how would you rate the effectiveness of the counselors at the grade level indicated in item 1?

_____1. Very helpful

_____2. Somewhat helpful

_____3. Not very helpful

_____4. Of no help

April 1971: Guidance Services
and the Research Division

The following activities are ways in which counselors may work with teachers. On the left, check to what extent the counselor(s) identified in item 1 have worked with you this year in each area. Then in the first column on the right, indicate how helpful the counselor was. If you answered Never on the left, leave this column blank. Finally, at the far right, check whether or not you think counselors and teachers should work together in that way.

How Often Has the Counselor(s) Worked With You This Year in Each Area					How Helpful Was the Counselor				Should Counselors and Teachers Work Together In This way		
	More Than Ten Times	5-10 Times	Once or Twice	Never		Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	No Help		Yes	No
					THE COUNSELOR:						
(6)	____	____	____	____	Provided information about individual students	(14) ____	____	____	(22)	____	____
(7)	____	____	____	____	Provided a resource for referral of students who needed special help	(15) ____	____	____	(23)	____	____
(8)	____	____	____	____	Offered suggestions that helped me cope with students who were not adjusting to class	(16) ____	____	____	(24)	____	____
(9)	____	____	____	____	Observed the classroom	(17) ____	____	____	(25)	____	____
(10)	____	____	____	____	Actively participated in classroom activities and group discussions	(18) ____	____	____	(26)	____	____
(11)	____	____	____	____	Participated with teachers in conferences concerning students with problems	(19) ____	____	____	(27)	____	____
(12)	____	____	____	____	Suggested or cooperatively planned activities and methods to develop appropriate classroom atmosphere	(20) ____	____	____	(28)	____	____
(13)	____	____	____	____	Suggested or cooperatively planned curriculum to meet the needs of the students	(21) ____	____	____	(29)	____	____

(30) How would you rate the counselors' methods of handling students with behavior problems?

_____1. Almost always effective

_____2. Usually effective

_____3. Occasionally effective

_____4. Rarely effective

(31) Which structure do you prefer?

_____1. Counselor handling of student behavior problems

_____2. Assistant principal handling of student behavior problems

_____3. No preference

_____4. Other. Qualifications, etc._____

_____

React to the following statements by checking the appropriate column. A few questions may not apply to some teachers because they may be first year teachers or they may not have been involved with the materials they have been asked to evaluate. If this is the case for any item, check the third column, "Does Not Apply to Me."

		Yes	No	Does Not Apply To Me
(32)	I think most teachers this year have tried to maintain a positive attitude toward students.	____	____	____
(33)	I think I have worked harder this year in teaching than in previous years.	____	____	____
(34)	I like the opportunity this year's program has given me to work more closely with other teachers.	____	____	____
(35)	I have done less objective testing this year than in previous years	____	____	____
(36)	I have used open book tests this year.	____	____	____
(37)	I have tried to coordinate homework assignments with other subjects.	____	____	____
(38)	I have held class (circle) meetings in my classes this year.	____	____	____

		Yes	No	Does Not Apply to Me
(39)	I think having counselors, social workers, and other non-teaching personnel visit my classes is a valuable experience for everyone.	____	____	____
(40)	The use of Student Elective Units in the courses I teach has been a successful experience	____	____	____
(41)	Generally speaking, I like the new report grading system (A, B, C. and Conf.)	____	____	____
(42)	I feel this year's program has promoted more and better contacts between myself and the parents of my students.	____	____	____
(43)	I have a closer more personal relationship with my students this year than in previous years.	____	____	____
(44)	I have tried more innovative teaching methods this year than in previous years.	____	____	____
(45)	I have taught more process learning (as opposed to factual learning) this year than in previous years.	____	____	____
(46)	I have tried to place an emphasis on the discussion--inquiry method of learning.	____	____	____
(47)	I find INFO-7 valuable.	____	____	____
(48)	I have coordinated my curriculum with other teachers.	____	____	____
(49)	I have found class (circle) meetings to be a valuable use of class time.	____	____	____
(50)	I would like to continue or begin the use of Student Elective Units in my classes next year.	____	____	____
(51)	The new report grading system seems to encourage students, in a positive way, toward better performance.	____	____	____
(52)	I would like to have more training in conducting circle meetings.	____	____	____

Comments: Add any comments about this year's seventh grade program that you feel will be helpful._____

(use back side if more space is needed)

April 1971: Guidance Services, Northeast Junior High, and Research Division, Minneapolis Public Schools

Minneapolis Public Schools
Guidance Services Department

Student Evaluation of the Junior High Counseling Department

Students: It will be helpful to this school if you answer these questions as thoughtfully and as honestly as possible. Since we do not want to identify any individual student, do not put your name on any of these pages.

(1) How often have you talked with your counselor in his office this year?

_____1. Never
_____2. One time
_____3. 2-5 times
_____4. More than 5 times

(2) Did you ever go to the counselor's office on your own--that is, when you were not sent or asked to come to his office?

_____1. Yes _____2. No

If you have talked with your counselor, put a check (x) by each of the areas that you talked about.

(3) _____ My abilities, interests, test scores
(4) _____ Planning my classes for next year
(5) _____ Program changes for this year
(6) _____ Problems with schoolwork
(7) _____ Understanding myself
(8) _____ Trouble I had with school rules
(9) _____ Problems I had with a teacher
(10) _____ Problems I had with other students
(11) _____ Career and job possibilities for me in later life
(12) _____ Just to talk awhile

(13) How often have you seen your counselor in the school hallways this year?

_____1. Almost every day
_____2. About once a week
_____3. About once a month
_____4. Once or twice this year
_____5. Never

(14) How often has your counselor visited your classroom this year?

_____1. Almost every day
_____2. About once a week
_____3. About once a month
_____4. Once or twice this year
_____5. Never

(15) How often have you talked about important things with your counselor outside his office?

_____1. Never

_____2. One time

_____3. 2-5 times

_____4. More than 5 times

(16) Have you ever talked with your counselor because you've broken the school rules?

_____1. Never

_____2. One time

_____3. 2-5 times

_____4. More than 5 times

Check any of the following that describes your talks with the counselor about breaking school rules. You may check more than one.

(17) _____ I was bawled out

(18) _____ The counselor was interested in hearing what I had to say

(19) _____ I was afraid when I left the counselor's office

(20) _____ I was suspended

(21) _____ Together we tried to figure out a way for me to stay out of trouble

(22) _____ I found out it was up to me if I was going to stay out of trouble

(23) _____ We had a nice talk about why I broke the rules

(24) _____ I never talked with the counselor about breaking school rules

For each phrase below, check (x) whether or not the activity is part of the counselor's job.

		Yes	No	Don't Know
(25)	Helps students get along with other students	_____	_____	_____
(26)	Helps students plan and select their classes	_____	_____	_____
(27)	Disciplines students when they're in trouble	_____	_____	_____
(28)	Helps students understand themselves	_____	_____	_____
(29)	Helps students improve their schoolwork	_____	_____	_____
(30)	Helps teachers grade the students	_____	_____	_____
(31)	Suspends students when they get in trouble	_____	_____	_____
(32)	Helps students who have personal and social concerns such as feeling left out, shyness, trouble with family...	_____	_____	_____
(33)	Helps students get along with teachers	_____	_____	_____

For each of the following statements about <u>your</u> counselor, indicate whether you agree or disagree by checking (x) one of the blanks for each statement. <u>"He" means your counselor</u>.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
(34)	He likes to tell people what to do	____	____	____	____
(35)	I am afraid to go to the counselor when I am in trouble in school	____	____	____	____
(36)	He is interested in knowing how I look at things	____	____	____	____
(37)	I enjoy talking with my counselor	____	____	____	____
(38)	He tries to get me to be responsible for what I do	____	____	____	____
(39)	He doesn't seem to like me very much	____	____	____	____
(40)	I often feel that he has more important things to do when I am talking to him	____	____	____	____
(41)	I would go to the counselor on my own if I need help	____	____	____	____
(42)	He usually tells me what I should do rather than letting me decide for myself	____	____	____	____
(43)	I feel that he is honest with me; in other words, he says what he <u>really</u> thinks or feels	____	____	____	____
(44)	He hurries me through my business with him	____	____	____	____
(45)	He is friendly and warm toward me	____	____	____	____
(46)	He tries to see things the way I do and to understand how I feel	____	____	____	____
(47)	He always gives me a chance to explain my side of things	____	____	____	____
(48)	Being called to the counselor probably means I have done something wrong	____	____	____	____
(49)	He understands me	____	____	____	____
(50)	It is hard for me to know what he is really like as a person	____	____	____	____
(51)	He tells his opinions more than I want to know them	____	____	____	____
(52)	I feel comfortable talking with the counselor about myself	____	____	____	____

(53) Overall, do you think the counselor is a helpful person to students?

_____1. Very helpful to students

_____2. Sometimes helpful to students

_____3. I don't know

_____4. More harmful than helpful to students

Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements by checking (x) one of the blanks for each statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
(54) In most cases, I am treated fairly by my teachers.	____	____	____	____
(55) Open book examinations more accurately test what I have learned about a subject than closed book exams.	____	____	____	____
(56) I have been involved in the planning of several units in various subjects.	____	____	____	____
(57) I have been involved in several class (or circle) meetings this year	____	____	____	____
(58) I think counselors should visit classrooms frequently.	____	____	____	____
(59) I would like to see Student Elective Units continued in my classes next year.	____	____	____	____
(60) Generally, I like the new report card grading system. (A, B, C, and Conf.)	____	____	____	____
(61) School rules are <u>not</u> enforced fairly.	____	____	____	____
(62) The amount of homework I have had this year has been about right.	____	____	____	____
(63) The circle meetings I did participate in were <u>not</u> a good use of class time	____	____	____	____
(64) I think Student Elective Units should be longer in length so that fewer changes in class assignments are made.	____	____	____	____
(65) I don't think the new report card grading is fair.	____	____	____	____
(66) I like the opportunity to change teachers several times during the year.	____	____	____	____

Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements by checking (x) one of the blanks for each statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagr
(67) I understand the reason for most of my homework assignments.	____	____	____	____
(68) I would like circle meetings in more of my classes next year.	____	____	____	____
(69) I like the "Conf." grade instead of having D's and Fails.	____	____	____	____
(70) I would like to have my parents have the opportunity to talk more often with my teachers.	____	____	____	____

(71) What grade are you in?

_____1. Seventh grade

_____2. Eighth grade

_____3. Ninth grade

(72) What sex are you?

_____1. Male

_____2. Female

(73) Which of the following best describes the grades you usually receive in school?

_____1. Very low

_____2. Below average

_____3. Average

_____4. Above average

_____5. Excellent

Comments: Use this space to make any comments about the seventh grade program.

_____

_____

_____

_____

April 1971: Guidance Services,
Northeast Junior High,
and Research Division
Minneapolis Public Schools

Parent Evaluation
of the
Seventh Grade Expanded Program
April 1971

React to the following statements by checking the appropriate column.	Yes	No	Not Sure
1. Generally speaking, I have been satisfied with the adjustment of my son/daughter to seventh grade this year.	____	____	____
2. When I have had contact with the school, I have received action on my requests. (If no contact has been made, leave blank).	____	____	____
3. I believe the grading system of A, B, C and Conf. is an improvement over the system of A, B, C, D, F.	____	____	____
4. The use of Student Elective Units in several subjects such as English, geography, art, etc. has made my son/daughter more interested in school and specific subjects.	____	____	____
5. Generally speaking, I believe the program has succeeded with my child and I would like to see it continued.	____	____	____

6. Have you had any other children attend Northeast Junior High as a seventh grader?

____1. Yes ____2. No

7. If you answered yes to question 6, how would you compare this year's program with the seventh grade program your other children had when they attended Northeast?

____1. Better

____2. Same

____3. Not as good

8. If you answered yes to question 6, how well does your child who is presently in seventh grade seem to like school compared with your other children when they were in seventh grade at Northeast?

____1. My child in seventh grade now seems to like seventh grade better than my other children did.

____2. My child in seventh grade now doesn't seem to like seventh grade as well as my other children did.

____3. I see no difference in how well my children liked seventh grade.

Comments: Please use this space and the back of the sheet to make any comments about the seventh grade program. _____